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SUMMARY DOCUMENT

Note prepared by the secretariat

ADDENDUM

CROSS-SECTORAL ACTIVITIES INVOLVING OTHER PRINCIPAL SUBSIDIARY BODIES

1. This note has been prepared to accompany the Summary Document (E/ECE/1315). It is intended as a supportive document to provide background information and to stimulate thinking for open discussion during the Programme and Coordination segment of the fiftieth Annual Session. The half-day session to which this document relates is dedicated to discussing the interaction between various aspects of the Commission's programme of work which lend themselves to cross-sectoral cooperation, leading to a more efficient concentration of resources and more coordinated programme delivery.

2. Both existing cross-sectoral interaction and suggestions for expanded or additional interfacing are grouped according to four major categories of activity. The first is various synergies revolving around environmental and general sustainable development activities. Here environmental concerns take in Transport, Energy, Timber, Agriculture, Senior Economic Advisers, and even Human Settlements and Statistics, with further potential noted for Timber/Energy, Industry and Technology, Agriculture and Trade.

3. Another category of interaction revolves around Statistics. This category covers all ECE sectors, with special reference to Economic Analysis and Projections, Energy, Industry and Technology, Agriculture and Human Settlements.

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4. A third category centres on current and potential Trade-related synergies, which include, notably, Economic Analysis and Projections, Transport and Environment (especially with reference to UN/EDIFACT), as well as Energy, Industry and Technology and Agriculture and Timber.

5. A final general category of interdivisional cooperation presented herein is in standardization and norm-setting, particularly important - as is the case with statistical matters - for the conceptual, political or technical problems in the PSBs which are addressing them. The obvious need to synergize in the normative area has been assured by an inter-divisional team on standardization, fostering joint seminars involving Agriculture and Timber and Industry and Technology, Energy, Transport and Human Settlements, with further potential noted for Trade.

Main conclusions and issues

6. From the review below, the following conclusion can be drawn and issues raised for consideration by the Commission.

(a) There is already an important interaction between the different subsidiary bodies as well as between the Divisions as illustrated in the following paragraphs. The interaction is considered useful as long as it is mutually beneficial. At the secretariat level the development of multidisciplinary cooperation has to be the result of an organic process and must be reflected in the programme of work. That would be more easily achieved if subsidiary bodies were to incorporate multidisciplinary elements in their own work programme.

(b) In the following paragraphs, areas where further interaction could be considered are mentioned. The Commission may wish to ask the PSBs to consider some or all of them and may also suggest other areas for closer interaction.

(c) In most meetings of subsidiary bodies, there is a standard agenda item on activities of other Principal Subsidiary Bodies (PSBs) related to the work of that body. The Commission may wish to ask for next year a report by the chairperson of the main PSBs on lessons drawn and advice taken on the basis of debates related to this agenda item and to make suggestions as to how to make them more constructive.

(d) The issues and activities selected in this part of the Summary Document are those which are conducive to cross-sectoral cooperation. Each of the Chairpersons of the Committee on Environmental Policy, the Committee on Energy, the Senior Economic Advisers and the Conference of European Statisticians, may be incited to convene a meeting with chairpersons or a representative of the bureau of the PSB with which interaction exists or should exist in order to plan this future development.

Regional Conference on Transport and the Environment, Environment for Europe, and related issues pertinent to cross-sectoral cooperation for sustainable development

7. An inter-sectoral activity already well-known to the Commission is the preparatory work for the 1996 Regional Conference on Transport and the Environment. Four meetings of the Preparatory Committee have already been

held. Careful attention has been given to assuring an adequate balance of Government representation from both the transport and environment sectors. For its part, the Committee on Environmental Policy urged delegations to ensure that the role of environmental representatives was sufficiently prominent in the preparatory process and underlined the importance of electing a vice-chairman representing environmental interests at the second session of the Preparatory Committee of the Conference. The Committee on Human Settlements also agreed to cooperate in the preparation of the Conference.

8. Close cooperation was also established at secretariat level with the environment and energy sectors in the preparation of the Conference. Among other things, the questionnaire to Governments to identify the topics to be dealt with by the Conference and to take stock of the measures already applied or under consideration was drafted by the Transport Division, taking into account discussions and written comments from the Divisions of Environment and Energy as well as Statistics. On the basis of the replies provided by more than thirty Governments to the questionnaire, the secretariat prepared useful documentation which was considered a solid basis for the identification of the topics to be dealt with by the Conference and the preparation of its final documents.

9. A similar close interaction is demonstrated by the Joint Working Group on Environment and Economics under the auspices of the Committee on Environmental Policy and the Senior Economic Advisers. Their work includes the promotion of the use of economic instruments for environmental policies and, in particular, the extension to the entire ECE region of relevant guidelines prepared by OECD for its member countries.

10. The Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe" to be held in Sofia in October 1995 has strong cross-sectoral support. The Environment for Europe Programme itself incorporates the integration of environmental policy with transport policy (see E/ECE/1316), and other interaction and inputs have been strengthened among working parties and the Project Steering Committee reporting to the Committee on Energy, as well as with other PSBs, particularly those dealing with Environment, Statistics, Transport and Human Settlements, in view of the close cross-sectoral linkages. For example, the Committee on Human Settlements requested the secretariat to provide all necessary energy-related inputs for the Conference.

11. Similar inputs are being provided for the preparation of Habitat II. The Regional Preparatory meeting for Habitat II stated that ECE's contribution should make full use of the work and capacity of different relevant subsidiary bodies and that a task force should be set up within the Commission to monitor the regional contributions. Such a task force has been established under the title of Interdivisional Coordination Group.

12. There is in addition a need for cooperation on the housing indicators elaborated by Habitat/World Bank, and the Committee on Human Settlements expressly recognized the importance of its cooperation with the Conference on European Statisticians.

13. A Task Force has been established jointly by the Committee on Environmental Policy (Working Party on Water Problems) and the Committee on Agriculture (FAO/ECE Working Party on Relations between Agriculture and the Environment) which has elaborated Draft Guidelines on the prevention and

control of water pollution from fertilizers and pesticides, which are expected to be finalized in 1995.

14. The relationship already existing between Environment and Energy can also be strengthened and linked with Timber, by expanding on, for example, wood-for-energy questions, and sustainable management of forests. The Timber Committee has already endorsed the principle of a workshop on the use of wood for energy to bring together wood energy experts with policy makers in the field of Energy and Environment. The secretariat has taken steps to seek the concurrence of the Committee on Energy and the Committee on Environmental Policy in securing the active participation of senior policy makers in this workshop. Timber might at the same time team up with Energy to study renewable sources of energy.

15. More generally, the emphasis within the Timber Committee on follow-up to UNCED and the Helsinki Conference on Protection of Forests in Europe leads to substantial cooperation with the Committee on Environmental Policy, while its core activity on timber and timber markets and trade lends itself to strengthened cooperation with the Committee on the Development of Trade with regard to commercial aspects. Further synergies could be obtained by involving Transport for trade-related questions of infrastructure.

16. Another possible inter-sectoral link-up for Timber might be a joint activity on forest technology, management and training which could be expanded to include Industry and Technology. In the related agricultural sector, transport networks and the transport of dangerous goods provide fertile ground for interface.

17. Proposals to convene a possible European Forum on Sustainable Industrial Development were discussed at the Meeting of Experts convened for this purpose in November 1994, in accordance with decision A (49). In accordance with the meeting's recommendations, the secretariat prepared an analytical document "Sustainable Industrial Development in Europe" (IND/AC.1/3), taking stock of current activities in the field of sustainable industrial development, the added value which ECE could contribute in this field, and a list of priority issues of common interest to all member countries, for consideration at the possible Forum. The European Industrial Forum, if approved by the Commission, would have a strong cross-sectoral orientation and support. All ECE Divisions could significantly contribute to the preparations and outcome of the Forum. A final decision on the convening of the Forum on identified priority issues is to be taken at the fiftieth session of the Commission.

Interaction of Energy Efficiency in Other Sectors or Activities of the ECE

18. Energy efficiency is a cross sectoral issue that relates in a variety of ways to the work of most PSB and has done so for over a decade. Indeed, the widespread interest in energy matters lead to the establishment of the ECE Inter-Divisional Task Force on Energy during the early 1980s which contributed to the preparation of the book An Efficient Energy Future. Each Division of the ECE secretariat, as they were constituted at that time, contributed to the energy demand projections to the year 2000 for that book with data and forecasting assumption on world trade, baseline data, economic growth, energy supply projections, human settlements, transport, and industry. The final draft of the book was reviewed by the Task Force in late 1981.

19. At present, energy efficiency activities are carried out under the Committee on Energy, the Energy Efficiency 2000 Project and through the activities of different PSBs and Working Parties of the ECE. Interaction takes place mainly through organising joint seminars or meetings; participation of delegates from different Working Parties in energy efficiency activities or Energy Efficiency 2000 Project events; use of data and information in energy efficiency policy studies; use of guidelines and analyses in energy efficiency demonstration zones; reporting to annual sessions of Working Parties on energy efficiency activities; issuing joint papers on energy efficiency issues of interest to two Working Parties; and an annual review of energy conservation policies at the Committee on Energy.

20. Further enhancement of cross-sectoral cooperation in this field would most likely require establishing a new Inter-Divisional Task Force on Energy Efficiency, with adequate budgetary resources to fulfil its mandate. Energy efficiency demonstration zones would offer the most productive form of cooperation for all PSBs to contribute to an operational activity in the economies in transition.

Statistics-related interaction within the ECE secretariat and among other PSBs

21. Another broad area of inter-sectoral linkages is statistics. Staff of the Statistical Division of the ECE participate actively in the meetings of other PSBs, particularly where the work of a given PSB is concerned directly with statistics. For example, the Statistical Division is providing the substance of ECE inputs into the work of the Study Group on Food and Agriculture Statistics in Europe, a subsidiary body of the Committee on Agriculture and of the CES. Statistical work has also been provided by the Statistical Division in the fields of science and technology, engineering industries and automation, and steel, working parties of the Industry and Technology Division. There are many more examples in other domains, such as Energy and Human Settlements.

22. The collection and sharing of data is also an important cooperative activity within the ECE. For example, the Statistical Division is responsible for providing the Division for Economic Analysis and Projections with the economic statistics which it needs for the Survey and Bulletin. This particular interdivisional cooperation is facilitated by a joint team (IDEST), comprised of staff from the two divisions. The task is increasingly onerous with many more countries, most of which have difficulty in supplying data and are unfamiliar with the statistical standards which they are now having to apply within the System of National Accounts. Statistically related work with other PSBs and organizational units is presented in tabular form in document CES/760 of 15 April 1993.

23. The Integrated Presentation of Statistical Programmes of all international organizations active in the region includes all of the statistical activities of the ECE including those activities which are mandated by PSBs other than the Conference of European Statisticians. The Conference of European Statisticians is thereby well informed through the joint presentation of work programmes.

24. The Statistical Division will also ensure that all ECE divisions have the latest version of the Integrated Presentation of Statistical Programmes and will ask that the relevant parts of the presentation be made available to

other PSBs. It is suggested that the appropriate parts of the presentation, which are in the three languages of the ECE, should be presented to other PSBs as conference room papers. In this way other PSBs will be as well informed as the Conference of European Statisticians and can take the statistical work of others into account when planning their own statistical activities.

25. The Conference of European Statisticians (CES), at the request of the Commission, reviewed the statistical publications of all PSBs in the ECE and made recommendations. In the event, 39 publications were reviewed by the secretariat of the Statistical and other Divisions in consultation with all the relevant PSBs. (The final summary report and recommendations (ECE/CES/46), approved by the CES in June 1994, is now before the Commission for its approval.) Many of the publications reviewed were not strictly statistical publications, but contained a significant proportion of statistics.

26. The Director of the Statistical Division holds the responsibility for the Information Systems Unit and the Graphics Design Unit, both of which serve the whole of the ECE, and through these mechanisms, in close cooperation with his colleagues, provides information technology and graphics design services throughout the ECE.

UN/EDIFACT and other trade-related synergies where cooperation with other PSBs is becoming more critical

27. Future support from and cooperation with other ECE Divisions will become an increasingly critical issue for the Trade Facilitation section's continued role in managing the development of the UN/EDIFACT standard. Despite its evolution from efforts to facilitate the flow of information supporting international trade transactions, electronic data interchange based on the UN/EDIFACT standard is becoming an integral part of commercial and administrative activities which may have no direct relation to international trade transactions. Transport and Environment are two such areas. Examples include increased industrial efficiency through better logistical support from suppliers and transporters; improved environmental monitoring; accurate and timely statistical reporting. None of these activities necessarily involve international trade but all stand to benefit from UN/EDIFACT.

28. The wide range of expertise within the ECE is a very strong argument in favour of its UN/EDIFACT mandate, as opposed to an organization which is predominantly oriented towards a specific sector. Given its special responsibility to assist member States with economies in transition, the ECE recognizes that its support to policy and economic development must ensure that the legal, commercial and administrative infrastructures established today do not create barriers to the modern information technology that will become operational in these countries in next decade. Coordination between the regional adviser for trade facilitation and other regional advisers seeks to ensure that projects carried out in countries in transition promote the adoption of international standards.

29. Ways should be investigated to begin active cooperation with, for example, the Transport Division. Urgent need to improve border crossing infrastructure in countries in transition provides an excellent focus for collaboration between Transport and Trade. Border crossing operations could be streamlined through better integration of transport infrastructure and customs

controls. Transport conventions could be enhanced by introducing UN/EDIFACT to avoid new trade barriers being created by divergent transport systems and customs procedures. Information flows supporting national statistics could be enhanced through the application of UN/EDIFACT. By incorporating the underlying concepts of UN/EDIFACT into the information systems designed to support all areas of economic activity, these countries can avoid the costly conversion exercises which institutions in western market economies are required to undergo in order to reach the high levels of efficiency required to remain competitive. Logistics could additionally be improved to enable small and medium-sized enterprises to become cost-effective and maintain the quality assurance levels required by western markets.

30. In addition, a large number of UN/EDIFACT standard messages have been or are under development in the fields of customs and transport, particularly container transport. The Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport (WP.30) is regularly informed about these developments. Similarly the Working Party on Facilitation of International Trade Procedures (WP.4) is kept informed about developments with regard to ECE Customs and Transport Facilitation Conventions.

31. One important segment of work during the forthcoming revision of the TIR Convention is to secure the TIR transit system against fraudulent activities and to improve and speed up transmission of information among concerned customs authorities and guaranteeing associations. A possible solution could be to provide, in a revised convention, for the possibility to replace or complement the existing paper-based TIR Carnet by EDI messages based on the UN/EDIFACT standards. Work on this issue will require close cooperation between the ECE Trade and Transport Divisions as well as between WP.4 and WP.30.

32. Transport also benefits from Economic Analysis and Projections. Given the close linkages and parallelism in the growth rates of GDP and transport demand, both passengers and goods, the Transport Division makes extensive use of the work of the Division of Economic Analysis and Projections in the preparation of the annual document which the Transport Division presents to the Inland Transport Committee.

33. Another trade-focused activity, the Economic Bulletin for Europe, is one of the major inputs into the annual session of the Committee on the Development of Trade and is, along with the Economic Survey for Europe, an example of close cooperation between the Trade Division and the Division of Economic Analysis and Projections. The Survey and the Bulletin further provide a background to the exchanges on sectoral policy conducted in the different PSBs. For example, the annual Review of Forest Products Markets (Timber Committee) refers to overview of macroeconomic conditions prevailing in the region, based on the Economic Survey and Bulletin and prepared in collaboration between the Timber Section and the Division for Economic Analysis and Projections. They also benefit from the work and analysis carried out in the Trade and Energy Committees and the working groups in Industry.

34. Still in trade-related matters, in the preparation of the study called for under decision C (49) containing recommendations on ways and means of promoting the expansion of trade of the countries in transition, an intra-secretariat task force comprising experts from a number of divisions (notably

DEAP and Industry and Technology) was organized. The resulting paper, presented to the Commission at its fiftieth Session, represents a successful interdisciplinary effort.

35. There is scope for further cooperation between the Trade Division and other Divisions (in particular Economic Analysis, Environment and Industry and Technology) in the preparation of joint studies and workshops on cross-sectoral issues. In particular, a number of potential projects involving Regional Advisers from other Divisions (Industry and Technology, Environment, Agriculture and Timber) are at present under discussion. These projects include: preparation of a study/guide on environmental-type obstacles faced by eastern exporters to international markets; organizing a conference/workshop on FDI promotion in Georgia; assisting in organizing an investment forum from the Republic of Moldova with the special purpose of helping SMEs in their search for foreign partners; assistance in formulating policies on SME development and promotion in Belarus and Georgia; and a project identification mission to Russia regarding trade in forest products. Preliminary contacts with the interested host countries have already been established with a view to preparation of the detailed outlines for proposed projects. It is expected that by combining knowledge of general policy subjects acquired by the Trade Division's staff members with a specific expertise in particular fields from other Divisions, a balanced package of general and concrete recommendations specially tailored to the needs of a certain country in transition could be produced. This type of cross-divisional activity also maximizes opportunities for efficiency gains.

Interdivisional cooperation on standardization

36. Several PSBs are engaged in standardization activities, and coordination within the ECE secretariat is assured by an interdivisional team on standardization. Workshops and seminars in the fields of standardization have been organized and serviced jointly by the Industry and Technology Division with the Agriculture and Timber Division, the Energy Division, the Environment and Human Settlements Division and the Transport Division.

37. The Working Party on Standardization Policies is the only ECE subsidiary body which deals with standardization matters in a fully cross-sectoral manner, although the Energy and Environment Divisions also share cross-sectoral activities. Cooperation between the three Divisions concerned has taken the form of joint seminars on international standards for the protection of the environment and on energy efficiency standards.

38. In 1994 trade facilitation activities (Trade Division) and standardization of perishable produce (Agriculture and Timber Division) were brought to the attention of the Working Party on Standardization Policies, and vice-versa.

39. Additionally, a staff member of the Transport Division was invited as a key speaker to a workshop in Minsk, Belarus, in December 1994, sponsored by the Working Party on Standardization Policies. Another key speaker at this workshop was a staff member of the Agriculture and Timber Division, who lectured on food standardization and inspection.

40. The Working Party on Standardization Policies systematically maintains working relations with a number of other PSBs. Several workshops on

standardization have been serviced jointly by the Industry and Technology Division and the Agriculture and Timber Division.

41. Considerable scope exists for closer cooperation with other PSBs of the Commission, in particular on projects falling under the Industry and Technology CHEMISEED programme, as well as on the harmonization of chemical industry statistics.

Redeployment within existing ECE bodies indicates natural synergies

42. The possible redeployment of the subsidiary bodies of the Committee of Agriculture to other PSBs of the Commission is indicative of the cross-sectoral dimensions of work in the field of agriculture and creates future opportunities for synergies between these PSBs.